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GOVERNOR

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KARYN POLITO
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Baker-Polito Administration Celebrates Completion of Blackstone River Greenway Segment 1

New Multi-Use Pathway Will Connect Blackstone Valley Region with Recreational Opportunities

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Today, state officials joined with local partners and stakeholders to celebrate the completion of Segment 1 of the Blackstone River Greenway, a proposed 48-mile long greenway that seeks to connect Massachusetts residents and visitors to the City of Providence in Rhode Island. Once fully constructed, the greenway will connect many Massachusetts communities to an additional 11 miles of trails already completed across the Rhode Island border. At today's celebration, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Leo Roy highlighted the Baker-Polito Administration's collaborative efforts to partner with local officials, organizations, and the public to complete the new section of multi-use pathway in Blackstone Valley.

"Building multi-use pathways improves the Commonwealth's recreational and transportation needs, and the communities of the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor will benefit from this important project to further connect the region," said **Governor Charlie Baker**. "We look forward to residents and visitors taking full advantage of the opening of the first segment, which will provide walkers, runners, bikers, and others with a new option for healthy outdoor recreational activities."

"Building a stronger Commonwealth means serving as a reliable partner for our cities and towns," said **Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. "We are grateful to the Massachusetts communities along the Blackstone River Greenway who assisted with the design, permitting, and land acquisition necessary to open this new connection between Central Massachusetts and our neighbors in Rhode Island,"

Segment 1 extends 3.5 miles from Route 146A in Uxbridge over the signature Triad Bridge in the Town of Millville within DCR's Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park to St. Paul Street in Blackstone, and includes eight bridges and one tunnel. \$22 million in funding was provided through DCR's capital investment plan, the Commonwealth's Accelerated Bridge Program, and an Interdepartmental Service Agreement (ISA) with MassDOT. Continuing from Segment 1 in Uxbridge, the DCR is exploring a 12-mile trail extension into Connecticut and has already begun developing a series of trails connecting into Bellingham along the Southern New England Trunkline Trail. MassDOT is presently designing Segment 7 in an effort to connect the proposed Blackstone Visitor Center in Worcester to Segment 6 in Millbury.

"Trails provide tremendous access to our natural world through important habitats and diverse ecosystems, offering exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities for everybody to enjoy," said **Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. "By striking the right balance between preserving public land and constructing multi-use pathways, residents of the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor will now have a critical connection between Massachusetts communities and those of our neighboring state."

"We are pleased that all the work has been completed on three and a half miles of the Blackstone River path and that members of the public will be able to connect to the state park, other open spaces, neighborhoods and community centers," said **Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack**. "Segment by segment, the Baker-Polito Administration is building out the walking and biking infrastructure in Massachusetts which is so important to grow the state economy and to improve the quality of life for people who live, work and visit our great state."

Since taking office in 2015, the Baker-Polito Administration has designed, planned, funded, and/or completed approximately 150 miles in new trails throughout the Commonwealth. Multi-use trails provide additional benefits to communities and regions, such as:

- Increasing recreational opportunities to incorporate a healthy, active lifestyle;
- Strengthening regional and community bonds;
- Increasing home property values;
- Attracting additional tourists; and,
- Supporting small businesses.

"Every year, the Department of Conservation and Recreation works to prioritize new investments in our state parks system, which encompasses nearly half a million acres of natural, cultural, and historic resources readily available for the public to enjoy," said **DCR Commissioner Leo Roy**. "The Baker-Polito Administration remains committed to providing a

high level of access to important regional resources like the Blackstone River Greenway for people of all abilities to benefit from, and we look forward to the completion of additional segments along the greenway."

The Blackstone Valley National Historic Corridor is made up of 24 communities and approximately half a million residents. In 1986, Congress established the John H. Chaffee Blackstone Valley National Historic Corridor Commission to oversee operation of the historic corridor, which played an important role in the region's growth and development during the Industrial Revolution. Through Segment 1's development, the DCR and MassDOT have worked closely with the Corridor Commission to ensure that its historic assets are protected while new pathways are added.

"This is an amazing resource for Blackstone and the surrounding towns," **said State Representative Kevin Kuros (R-Uxbridge)**. "Literally every time I come by here the parking lots are packed and the Greenway is buzzing with activity. I am deeply appreciative of the work that DCR and the Baker-Polito Administration has done to bring this to fruition."

"I am thrilled this segment of the Greenway has been completed. Blackstone Valley is a historic region, and projects like this help keep our community strong. I am grateful for the work of all state and local officials who contributed to the greenway," **said State Senator Ryan Fattman (R-Webster)**.

Additional segments of the Blackstone River Greenway are at various stages of planning and design. For information regarding the state parks system or the network of trails contained within it, please visit the DCR's [website](#).